

**THE MINUTES OF THE 521ST STATED MEETING OF THE
PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION
13 January 2006**

**1515 Arch Street, Room 18029
Michael Sklaroff, Esq., Chair**

PRESENT

Michael Sklaroff, Esq., Chair
Warren Huff, Deputy Director, City Planning Commission
Joseph James, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Public Property
Sara Merriman, Special Assistant to the Director, Department of Commerce
David Perri, Department of Licenses & Inspections
Vincent Rivera, AIA
Denise Smyler, Esq.
Harris Steinberg, AIA
Thomas Sugrue, Ph.D.
Norman Tissian
Scott Wilds, Deputy Commissioner, Office of Housing & Community Development

Randal Baron, Historic Preservation Specialist
Jorge Danta, Historic Preservation Planner
Jonathan E. Farnham, Acting Historic Preservation Officer
Karen Gonski, Administrative Technician

Lawrence Copeland, Esq., Senior Attorney, City Law Department
Leonard Reuter, Assistant City Solicitor, City Law Department

ALSO PRESENT

Tania Rorke, Society Hill Civic Association
John Gallery, Preservation Alliance
Richard Tucker, Hamam Enterprises
Richard Thom, AIA
Peter Johnson, Three Bears
Heather Lutzker, Graboyes Windows
William Rhodes, Elfreth's Alley Association
Robert Power, Powers & Co.
Tom Whittle, 9647 Pine Road
George Calomiris, Calomiris Company
Jim Nolen, Nolen Development
Nurit Nachurum, 329 South Street
Michael Ascher, CCRA
John Vasiliou, CVM
Jerry Fiore, CVM
Liz Blazeovich, Preservation Alliance
Wayne Spilove
Terry Graboyes, Graboyes Windows
Mike Rapart
Chris Christakis, CVM
Don Ventresca 900 Bodine Street
Carl Primavera, Esq., Klehr Harrison

Sean D. McDougall, Visionary Development Co.
Laura Siena, West Mt Airy Neighbors
Louis Frischling
David W. O'Donnell, Queen Village Neighbors Association
Richard Wolk, Queen Village Neighbors Association
Edwin Rivera, Queen Village Neighbors Association
Vic Barr, VLBJR Architects, Inc.

521ST STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Michael Sklaroff, Chair, recognized the presence of a quorum and called the 521st Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission to order at 9:05 a.m.

MINUTES OF THE 520TH STATED MEETING OF THE PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ACTION: Upon a motion proffered by Mr. Huff and seconded by Mr. Wilds, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the 520th Stated Meeting of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, held December 9, 2005, Michael Sklaroff, Chair.

THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON HISTORIC DESIGNATION, 16 DECEMBER 2005

THOMAS SUGRUE, CHAIR

9647-9649 PINE ROAD

OWNER: Thomas and Anna Whittle

PROPOSAL: Rescind the individual designation of 9647-9649 Pine Road

DESIGNATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the rescission

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the rescission of the individual designation of 9647-9649 Pine Road. The single-family residential building is a late eighteenth-century farmhouse with nineteenth and twentieth-century additions and alterations. The current owners request the rescission to facilitate the demolition of the building and the construction of two new residences. The Commission considered the designation of the property on 24 June 1969.

In June 1969, owner Martin Leventon requested that the Historical Commission designate his property at 9647 Pine Road as historic. On 24 June 1969, the Commission reviewed the nomination and "agreed that the request from the owner of 9647 Pine Road be held in abeyance, pending further study." On 11 November 1969, Mrs. Charles J. Maurer of the Commission's staff inspected the property, photographed it, and wrote a one-page report describing the building. On 12 November 1969, she requested that the owner undertake some title research. The owner undertook the title research at some point after 22 March 1970, when he notified the Commission that he would conduct the research later that spring. An undated page of title research from the owner as well as an undated chain of title prepared by the staff resides in the Commission's file on the property. The address, 9647 Pine Road, is listed in the Commission's original Register, a group of three loose-leaf notebooks that was maintained from the establishment of the Commission until the adoption of the new ordinance. Likewise, the Commission's card index of designated properties includes 9647 Pine Road with a certification date of 24 June 1969. However, the staff has not discovered any evidence in the Commission's

minutes that it revisited the nomination after its initial review on 24 June 1969.

Section 5.5.c.1 of the Commission's Rules & Regulations enumerates three bases for rescinding an entry on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. They are:

- 1) the resource has ceased to meet the criteria for listing on the Register because the qualities that caused its original entry have been lost or destroyed,
- 2) additional information shows that the resource does not meet the criteria for the Register, or
- 3) error in professional judgment as to whether the resource meets the criteria for listing.

This application proffers none of the three bases as justification for the rescission. In fact, none of the three bases are applicable. The exterior condition of the house and lot are virtually identical to their conditions at the time of designation in 1969; nothing has been lost or destroyed. No additional pertinent information has been presented. And no error in professional judgment has been alleged or was made.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the application to the Commission. Thomas Whittle, the owner, represented the application.

MOTION: Mr. Steinberg moved to accept the recommendation of the Committee on Historic Designation and deny the rescission application. Ms. Smyler seconded the motion.

Mr. Wilds questioned whether the Commission had, in fact, designated the building in 1969. The minutes of the 24 June 1969 Commission meeting state that the Commission would hold the designation "in abeyance, pending further study." Mr. Farnham noted that at the time this property was designated, the Commission required a chain of title among other pieces of information to complete the designation. Mr. Farnham explained that the staff interpreted the minute to mean that the Commission designated the property on 24 June 1969, giving the staff the authority to finalize the nomination once the research was completed. Correspondence between the staff and the owner as well as material in the Commission's file on the property confirms that the further research was completed in the following spring.

Mr. Sklaroff asserted that the Commission took no action on the nomination at the 24 June 1969 meeting; he asked whether the Commission took any action on the nomination at a subsequent meeting. Mr. Farnham replied that he had searched the minutes of subsequent meetings for 1969 to 1974 and discovered no further action or mention of the nomination. Mr. Sklaroff contended that a case could be made that this property was never designated. He asserted that "held in abeyance" does not mean designated. Mr. Sklaroff asked if the property was "listed" when the ordinance was amended. Mr. Farnham stated that the property was listed at that time. Mr. Wilds noted that it was listed only because the staff had entered it on the Register. Ms. Merriman suggested that the Law Department comment on the matter.

Lawrence Copeland of the City's Law Department joined the meeting. Mr. Sklaroff asked him to opine on the Commission's jurisdiction in this case. Mr. Copeland stated that he believes that the Commission does have jurisdiction over the property because it was listed on the Register at the time of the adoption of the current ordinance. The amended ordinance defines designated sites as either those designated under it or those "listed"

under the previous ordinance. Mr. Sklaroff asked if the Commission can designate by implication. He also asked if the nomination could be held in abeyance since 1969. He remarked that the only recorded action was the holding in abeyance. Mr. Wilds noted that anything held in abeyance remains under the Commission's jurisdiction. Mr. Sklaroff concluded that he believes that this property was not designated.

Mr. Copeland inquired if the Commission has reviewed any applications for this property since its alleged designation. Mr. Farnham looked through the file and then stated that it had not reviewed any applications for the property.

Mr. Sugrue stated that the Commission's card with the designation date had been accepted as proof of designation in other cases. He added that the Commission's minutes from the early years were not very detailed. The designations were often noted only with lists of addresses in the minutes.

Mr. Copeland inquired about the hand-written entry of 9647 Pine Road in the original Register. He asked if this type of entry was common. Mr. Farnham replied this type of annotation is very common.

Mr. Rivera asked if anyone had applied for a plaque for the property. The present owner, Mr. Whittle, replied that there was no such plaque on the property.

Mr. Copeland noted that there was not sufficient documentation to conclude with certainty that the Commission designated the property.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION: Mr. Steinberg and Ms. Smyler withdrew their motion to adopt the Committee on Historic Designation's recommendation and to deny the rescission application.

John Gallery of the Preservation Alliance emphasized the significance of the fact that the property was recorded as designated on the Commission's property card. He asserted that the people closest to the issue at the time in 1969 understood that the Commission intended to designate the property. He contended that the current Commission should not reinterpret the Commission's actions 37 years earlier. Mr. Sklaroff remarked that human error is a possibility. He reiterated that there is no record that the Commission acted in this case. Mr. Gallery asked whether the Commission has discovered other examples of documentation problems with other designations. Mr. Sklaroff pointed to the current application for 211-213 Vine Street. Mr. Gallery insisted that there is ample evidence that the property was listed when its designation was reaffirmed by the amended ordinance.

Mr. Perri asked when the Commission's card had been filled out, in 1969 or in 1985. Mr. Baron replied that the card was created in 1969. Mr. Sklaroff asserted that the minutes spoke of no action by the Commission. Mr. Steinberg inquired about the length of time a property can be held in abeyance. Mr. Copeland stated that a nomination could not be held in abeyance for 37 years. Mr. Huff expressed that other properties designated prior to 1985 will be in jeopardy if this registration card is invalidated.

FAILED MOTION: Mr. Wilds moved that the Commission resolve that 9647-9649 Pine Road was never designated as historic, that the property was never legitimately listed on the Register, and therefore the recommendation of the

Committee on Historic Designation is moot. Mr. Rivera seconded the motion, which failed with a vote of 5 to 6. Ms. Merriman and Messrs. Huff, Rivera, Tissian, Steinberg, and Sugrue dissented.

Ms. Smyler stated that denying the rescission application would be ill-advised because there is no evidence of a designation.

Thomas Whittle, the owner of property, spoke about correspondence between the owner at the time and the Commission in 1969. He asserted that alterations to the property acknowledged by the Commission's staff in 1969 called its significance into question. Mr. Sklaroff advised Mr. Whittle that he may appeal any Commission decision.

ACTION: Mr. Huff moved to adopt the Committee on Historic Designation's recommendation and deny the rescission of the individual designation of 9647-9649 Pine Road. Mr. Steinberg seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 6 to 5. Ms. Smyler and Messrs. Sklaroff, Perri, James, and Wilds dissented.

211-213½ VINE STREET

APPLICANT: Richard Thom, AIA

OWNER: Richard Tucker, Hamam Enterprises, LP

PROPOSAL: Rescission of Individual designation, retention of non-contributing status to Old City Historic District

DESIGNATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the rescissions of the individual designations of 211 and 213 Vine Street, provided the designation of 211-213½ Vine Street as a non-contributing site in the Old City Historic District is maintained.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the rescissions of the individual designations of the buildings at 211-213½ Vine Street in the Old City Historic District.

The Commission individually designated the buildings at some point prior to the adoption of the new preservation ordinance in 1984. The staff has been unable to document their designations in the minutes of the Commission or Committee on Historic Values, but the two addresses are listed in the original Register, a group of notebooks that was maintained from the establishment of the Commission until the adoption of the new ordinance. The current ordinance [§14-2007(2)(j)] defines an *Historic Building* as:

A building or complex of buildings and site which is designated pursuant to this section or *listed by the Commission under the prior historic buildings ordinance approved December 7, 1955, as amended.*

The buildings stand within the Old City Historic District and were classified as non-contributing when the district was created in 2003 despite their individual designations. The buildings were listed as non-contributing because they have very low integrity. Roofs, party walls, and entire floors have been demolished; windows and doors reconfigured, infilled, and moved; interiors gutted; adjacent buildings consolidated; party walls removed; sections of facades replaced; cornices, lintels, sills, and other features removed; and additions constructed. At 211 and 213 Vine Street, the first-floor front facades, roofs, and rear ells have been lost. On N. American Street, nothing remains of the two small historic buildings above the first floors; the second and third floors were demolished in 1968. The third small historic building, which stood at the corner of American and Vine, was demolished in the mid 1960s.

The applicant requests the rescissions pursuant to Section 5.5.c.1 of the Commission's Rules & Regulations. That section stipulates that an entry may be rescinded from the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places if "the resource has ceased to meet the criteria for listing on the Register because the qualities that caused its original entry have been lost or destroyed." Because the designation date is indeterminate, it is impossible to establish the condition of the buildings at the time of designation and therefore impossible to establish whether the qualities that prompted their designation have been lost or destroyed. Also, because there are no records of the designation other than the citations on the original register, it is impossible to determine what, if any, significance these buildings may have held for the Commission at the time of designation.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the rescission application to the Commission. Owner Dick Tucker and architect Richard Thom represented the application.

Mr. Wilds asked Mr. Baron to elaborate on his comments offered at the Architectural Committee meeting. Mr. Baron stated that the 213 Vine building has a Flemish Bond façade and dates to the late eighteenth century. The 211 Vine building has running bond and dates to the early nineteenth century. The corner building, of which only a fragment remains, was very unusual. He noted that the buildings were combined at some point and that the roofs and first-floor facades were demolished. He also explained that a single front doorway was inserted for the Vine Street buildings. He argued that these alterations were all undertaken during the Old City Historic District's period of significance and that they typify the sort of alterations made as Old City was converted to a wholesale and light industrial area. He contended that the changes themselves, which others perceive as a loss of integrity, were historically significant. The buildings are a clear record of the history of the area. Mr. Wilds noted that 213 Vine is the oldest structure. Its roof is lost, its cornice line is altered, and the first-floor facade has been replaced at least once. All that remains of the eighteenth-century building is the brick at the second and third-floor facades. Mr. Sklaroff agreed with Mr. Baron that changes undertaken during the period of significance can have their own historical significance.

At this time, Mr. Tucker displayed photographs of the bathhouse that occupied 211-213 Vine Street in the early 1900s.

Mr. Sklaroff asked Mr. Thom whether he was applying for rescission only or for rescission and the demolition and new construction with this application. Mr. Thom responded that he was applying for rescission only with the current application; he would file an additional application for the demolition and new construction. He noted that he studied rehabilitating these buildings and determined that it would be infeasible. Mr. Wilds stated that any hardship argument must be presented with a hardship application to the appropriate Committee.

Mr. Sklaroff summarized that the application raises two questions for the Commission. First, did the Commission actually designate the property? Second, has the loss of integrity rendered this property eligible for rescission?

Mr. Sugrue asserted that the buildings have suffered great losses since the 1960s including the demolition of most of the building along N. American Street. He claimed that the remainder is not a significant historic resource. He stated that the little historic fabric remaining is not worthy of individual designation. Mr. Steinberg disagreed with Mr.

Sugrue and agreed with Mr. Baron. He remarked that there is enough historic fabric remaining to allow for a restoration. He noted that numerous buildings with much less surviving historic fabric were reconstructed in Society Hill.

Mr. Baron stated that the documentation of the designations of hundreds of properties on the Register is incomplete. He reported that he had questioned the Law Department about undocumented designations several years ago. Although not in an official opinion, the Law Department confirmed that the amended ordinance confirmed the designations of all of those properties on Register with undocumented designations. He stated that the Historic Buildings section of the current ordinance was included because of the many early undocumented designations.

Mr. Sugrue noted that when the Old City Historic District was created in 2003, the Designation Committee and the full Commission deemed these buildings to be non-contributing to the district. He asserted that the recent classification must be considered in the current discussion. Mr. Wilds in comparing this application to the previous one; he stated that he believes that 211-213½ Vine Street was individually designated by the Commission.

ACTION: Mr. Sugrue moved to approve the rescissions of the individual designations of 211 and 213 Vine Street, provided the designation of 211-213½ Vine Street as a non-contributing site in the Old City Historic District is maintained. Ms. Smyler seconded the motion, which carried with a vote of 10 to 1. Mr. Steinberg dissented.

7048 GERMANTOWN AVENUE

OWNER: Germantown Avenue Holding, LP

NOMINATOR: Lois Frischling

PROPOSAL: Designation of individual property

DESIGNATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Designation of 7048 Germantown Ave as historic and its listing on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places.

OVERVIEW: This nomination proposes the designation of 7048 Germantown Avenue. An unusual house and a barn stand on the large parcel, which extends several hundred feet back from west side of Germantown Avenue between Sedgwick Street and Mt. Pleasant Avenue in the West Mt. Airy section of Philadelphia.

From an architectural perspective, the George H. Garrett House is highly significant. Stylistically, it is an Italian Villa style house with an older Greek Revival section. Rather than the more staid Italianate style, which is typified locally by the work of Samuel Sloan, the style exhibited by this building is more akin to that of A.J. Downing, the master of the picturesque. A rare example of an important movement in American architecture, this building is highly significant. The smaller Greek Revival section is extremely important in its own right. Architect Thomas Ustick Walter designed it in 1835 as a country seat for Garrett. The front portico was demolished when the Italian Villa section was added, but the remainder of this highly significant and unusual building survives. Walter, the designer of the dome of the U.S. Capitol, was one of the most important architects in the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century.

In addition to its architectural significance, the Garrett House holds a prominent place in

the City's social and economic histories. George H. Garret, the builder, was a leading businessman who amassed a fortune in the family snuff business. Other Garrett family members who lived at the home were also distinguished.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Commission. Mr. Steinberg commended the nominator, staff, and community group for preparing and presenting the nomination. He referred to the discovery of a Thomas U. Walter country house in Mt. Airy as stunning.

Mr. Sklaroff inquired about the condition of the house. Mr. Farnham replied that the lot is overgrown and the house currently vacant, but that it appears to be in fairly good condition. He noted that it was occupied until a few months ago.

Mr. Copeland asked that the Commission comment specifically on the building's significance. Mr. Sugrue replied that the Italian Villa section of the building is significant, but that the Walter section is highly unusual and significant.

ACTION: Mr. Tissan moved to adopt the nomination, designate 7048 Germantown Ave as historic, and list it on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. Mr. Steinberg seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

THE REPORT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE, 20 DECEMBER 2005

Vincent Rivera, Chair

101-121 AND 221 WEST JOHNSON STREET

OWNER: Visionary Development Company

APPLICANT: George Calomiris

HISTORY: Nugent Home, 1896; Presser Home, 1913; carriage house, c. 1900

PROPOSAL: Construct three new buildings – in concept

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Denial of the proposal owing to the open issues related to the parking, the site plan, and the height and penthouse of the taller building.

In October 2005, the Historical Commission approved in-concept the massing and location of three new buildings at this large site with three historic buildings in Mt. Airy. At that time, the Commission chose not to approve, even conceptually, the site plan, rehabilitation plans for the historic buildings, or plans for the three new buildings. The Commission asserted that the plans were not developed sufficiently to warrant approvals.

As part of the October 2005 application, the developers proposed a contemporary design for the three identical apartment buildings that will be constructed at the rear and center of the large site. That contemporary design has been abandoned. In its place, three alternative building types are now proposed. Again, the developers propose to erect three near identical buildings. The two connected buildings at the center of the site will be five stories each; the one behind the Nugent building will be six.

Alternative One is very reminiscent of the historic Presser Home. Alternative Two is a Jacobean Revival building that is inspired by the Nugent Home as well as the buildings at the nearby Alden Park complex. Alternative Three is a contemporary building.

The site plan has been revised since the last review. Retaining walls have been added; the parking has been refined.

Most of the work proposed to the historic buildings, for example pointing and roof repairs, can be reviewed at the staff level. The stair tower at the Presser building cannot be reviewed at the staff level. Likewise, the aluminum windows and doors proposed for some façades of the historic buildings cannot.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Commission. Architect George Calomiris, engineer David Plante, attorney Carl Primavera, and developers Sean McDougal and James Nolen represented the application.

Mr. Sklaroff asked Mr. Danta if the plans marked "latest" were intended to address the issues raised at the Architectural Committee meeting. Mr. Danta stated that they were submitted after the Committee meeting and were a response to the issues raised at that meeting. Mr. Sklaroff asked Mr. Rivera if he would comment on the most recent plans. Mr. Rivera answered that the plans do rectify the problems noted by the Committee.

Mr. Wilds stated that he supports the approval in concept of the latest version of the plans. Mr. Steinberg pointed to some minor discrepancies between the architect's latest landscape plan and the engineer's site plan. He asked which represents the actual plan. Mr. Sklaroff commented that the discrepancies were insignificant for an application in concept. Mr. Wilds agreed and stated that the submitted plans are much more detailed than those reviewed for the in-concept review of the Naval Home, for example. Mr. Wilds contended that his concerns are addressed by the revised plans. Mr. Steinberg agreed and voiced his approval of the project. Mr. Sugrue asked why the proposal was in concept when the plans are so detailed and thorough. He stated that the plans are more detailed than 95% of those that the Commission approves in final form. Mr. Steinberg noted that the review process has greatly benefited the project; he commended the developers for cooperating with the process.

Mr. Sklaroff stated the developers are seeking an assurance from the Commission that this project is feasible from the preservation perspective. He stated that this in-concept review should consider the massing, size, and location of the new buildings. Mr. Rivera commented that the Committee discussed the parking in depth because the members felt that the architect had not provided enough spaces and later additions to the parking would encroach further on the site. Mr. Sklaroff suggested that several issues addressed by the Architectural Committee such as the number of parking spaces are outside the Commission's purview; he suggested that the Commission stay within its bounds and leave the parking and other zoning issues to the Zoning Board and the community.

Carl Primavera, the attorney for the application, stated that his client would like to move forward with an approval in concept.

Mr. Gallery stated that the Preservation Alliance and the three allied community organizations are completely in support of this project.

ACTION: Mr. Wilds moved to approve the latest revision of the proposal in concept. Ms. Merriman seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

900 BODINE STREET AKA 238 CHRISTIAN STREET

OWNER: Green Park Properties

APPLICANT: Don Ventresca

HISTORY: Lot subdivided from 238 Christian Street

PROPOSAL: New construction

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval, provided the false mansard is deleted and that section of the façade is constructed in brick.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes the construction of four residential units on a lot subdivided from a designated property at 238 Christian Street. The units would face Bodine Street, a very narrow street that is listed on the register as part of the Thematic Historic Street Paving District. None of the early nineteenth-century houses facing Bodine Street are designated as historic.

The Commission has already reviewed three applications for this project. The Commission approved the first application in March 2005. This original scheme proposed a single-family house that occupied the entire lot. The owner later abandoned this proposal and submitted a revised scheme to the Historical Commission in October 2005. The second application proposed to develop the lot as four separate units. The Committee unanimously recommended denial and the applicant withdrew the application prior to the Commission meeting. In November 2005, the applicant submitted a revised proposal, which was very similar in scale, massing and style to the October proposal. The Architectural Committee once again unanimously recommended denial and the applicant once again withdrew the application before the Commission meeting.

The Committee suggested in October 2005 that the applicant delete the mansard, reduce the size of the dormers, and give each of the four residences a door on Bodine Street. It made these suggestions to reduce the overpowering mass and scale of the proposed building. The revised design of November 2005 incorporated several cosmetic changes but essentially retained the same design. The Committee reiterated their suggestions on reduction of massing and scale and separate entrances on Bodine Street.

The current proposal incorporates some of the suggestions offered at the previous two Committee meetings. The four units are more clearly articulated as individual houses and the fenestration appears to have a more harmonious rhythm. The new design also breaks the massing of the third floor with the addition of mansards and a dormer on the two central units. It also creates a cornice at the second floor level on the end units. However, the scale and massing of the proposed building remains substantially unchanged. The monumental entrance alcove with side-by-side doors has remained unchanged throughout the three proposals, even though the Committee has repeatedly noted its awkwardness and requested its elimination.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the proposal. Don Ventresca, the developer, and Tom Bello, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Wilds asked if only the front elevation drawing had been submitted. The applicants replied that only the one drawing had been submitted for review. They noted that side elevations had been presented at earlier reviews. Mr. Wilds asked for an explanation of the unusual spacing of the windows at the second and third floors. Mr. Ventresca stated that the staff had dictated the design of the façade. Mr. Sklaroff asked for verification of

that assertion. Mr. Danta explained that the staff had met with the applicants to review comments and suggestions offered by the Architectural Committee, but it had in no way designed the façade.

Mr. Steinberg commended the applicants for the improvements made to the design over the many reviews. He suggested the brick pier or demarcation to the left of the doorway be omitted, leaving one wide central bay and two flanking bays. This alteration would render the façade more symmetrical.

Mr. O'Donnell, the president of the Queen Village Civic Association, spoke about the proposal. He explained this design was not presented to the association. He pointed out that the trinities on the east side of Bodine Street have a large shared courtyard. This building would have no rear yard. Mr. Ventresca responded that the lot includes open space to the north. Mr. Sklaroff asked about the size of the lot. Mr. Ventresca stated that the lot is 18' by 100' and the building would be 18' by 74'.

ACTION: Mr. James moved to approve the revised proposal, provided the central dividing pier is removed, creating a more symmetrical façade. Mr. Tissian seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Merriman excused herself from the meeting. Ms. Smyler excused herself from the meeting momentarily.

301 SOUTH 19TH STREET

OWNER: Wayne Spilove

APPLICANT: Heather Lutzker

HISTORY: 1924, Ballinger & Perrot, architects

PROPOSAL: Replace wood windows with aluminum windows

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the proposed aluminum windows at floors 5 to 15, provided wood windows matching the historic windows are installed on floors 1 to 4, with the staff to review details.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to replace all the windows on this fifteen-story apartment building. Currently the building has six-over-one double-hung wood windows. The applicant proposes to replace them with six-over-one metal double-hung windows. The drawings submitted by the applicant show that the replacement window would mimic the profile of the historic window almost exactly. The biggest difference would be a one inch increase at the jamb on either side. The top rail of the replacement window would be one inch bigger than the historic rail and the meeting rail of the replacement window would be ¼ inch bigger than the historic rail.

RECUSAL: Mr. Sklaroff recused owing to his relationship with the property owner, Wayne Spilove, the former chair of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Commission. Terry Graboyes, a window salesperson, represented the application.

Ms. Graboyes requested that the Commission approve the replacement of the windows on all floors with aluminum windows. She noted that the nearby building at 275 S. 19th

Street had wood windows originally and now has aluminum on all floors. In an effort to achieve continuity, energy efficiency, and sound, Ms. Graboyes requested the approval of aluminum windows on all floors.

Mr. Wilds asked the applicant if the aluminum windows would have the same appearance as the wood windows. Ms. Graboyes explained that the color could be matched, but that paint on wood does not look like paint on aluminum. She concluded that the aluminum windows would not replicate the appearance of the wood.

Mr. Sugrue asked the staff to comment. Mr. Baron stated that the windows in nearby buildings have no bearing on a discussion about the appropriate windows for this building. He reminded the Commission that it has a policy; it approves replacement windows in alternate materials for high-rise buildings above the fourth or fifth-floor height, above the height of the average row house. He noted the case of the University Club. When the building was recently redeveloped, the Commission approved wood at the lower, more visible floors, and an alternate material above. Mr. Wilds pointed out that this building has a distinct break above the second floor.

Wayne Spilove, the owner of the building, explained that the noise levels are very high in the spaces on the lower floors. Due to the noise level, he has rented the lower floors as office space. He also asserted that wood windows constitute a security problem. He requested an approval of the aluminum windows for security and noise reasons. Mr. Wilds asked him if the lower floors are now rented. He stated that they were. Mr. Steinberg stated that wood windows can provide sound insulation equivalent to that of aluminum. Ms. Graboyes countered that interlocking sashes are not available in wood and wood can warp.

Mr. Rivera suggested that the Commission take care to avoid setting an unfortunate precedent. Ms. Graboyes cited the property at 436 Walnut Street, across from Independence Hall, for which the Commission approved aluminum windows down to the second floor. She added that the first-floor windows are store front windows.

Michael Asher, representing the Center City Residents Association, opposed the application and requested that the Commission require wood windows at all floors on the front façade.

FAILED MOTION: Mr. Tissian moved to approve the proposed aluminum window at all floors. Mr. Huff seconded the motion, which failed with a vote of 3 to 5. Messrs. James, Wilds, Steinberg, Rivera, and Sugrue opposed.

ACTION: Mr. Wilds moved to approve the proposed aluminum windows at floors 3 to 15, provided wood windows matching the historic windows are installed on floors 1 and 2, with the staff to review details. Mr. Steinberg seconded the motion, which carried with a vote of 7 to 0. Mr. Tissian abstained.

326 SOUTH 19TH STREET

OWNER: Wayne Spilove

APPLICANT: Heather Lutzker

HISTORY: c. 1925

PROPOSAL: Replace windows with aluminum windows

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the proposed aluminum windows at floors 3 to 13, provided wood windows matching the historic windows are installed on floors 1 and 2, with the staff to review details.

OVERVIEW: This application proposes to replace all the windows on this thirteen-story apartment building. Currently the building has wood windows and the applicant proposes to replace them with metal. The profile of the proposed replacement window mimics the historic almost exactly. The most significant measurement differences would be as follows: the replacement jamb would be one inch bigger than the historic; the top rail of the replacement window would be roughly $\frac{3}{4}$ inch bigger; and the meeting rail of the replacement window would be $\frac{1}{4}$ inch bigger.

RECUSAL: Mr. Sklaroff recused owing to his relationship with the property owner, Wayne Spilove, the former chair of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Commission. Terry Graboyes, a window salesperson, represented the application.

Ms. Graboyes requested an approval for aluminum windows throughout the building. She reported that the building has aluminum windows now and that a previous owner removed the historic wood windows thirty years ago. She stated that she would replicate the original brickmold in aluminum. She concluded that the building would look “silly” with wood windows.

Mr. Wilds explained that the Commission has a very clear policy regarding replacement of non-historic features: the Commission always requires that non-historic features be replaced with historically appropriate features.

Ms. Smyler returned to the meeting.

ACTION: Mr. Steinberg moved to approve the proposed aluminum windows at floors 3 to 13, provided wood windows matching the historic windows are installed on floors 1 and 2, with the staff to review details. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion, which carried with a vote of 7 to 1. Mr. Perri dissented. Ms. Smyler abstained because she was not present for the discussion.

138-140 NORTH FRONT STREET

OWNER: 138 N. Front Street, LP

APPLICANT: Christos Christakis

HISTORY: remnant of nineteenth-century building, non-contributing to historic district

PROPOSAL: Demolish non-contributing building; construct four four-story townhouses with garages – in concept

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval in concept of the demolition of the non-contributing building except for the south wall and the construction of four contemporary townhouses with garages. The recommendation of approval in concept does not sanction the proposed heights, decks, facade designs, and details, which should be addressed at later reviews.

OVERVIEW: This application in concept proposes the demolition of a non-contributing structure. This structure is a nineteenth-century back building of an ornate commercial building that faced Front Street before its demolition for the construction of I-95. The south wall, facing Bladen's Court, will be retained. The applicant seeks to construct four townhouses with parking areas faced with metal gates. The townhouses will be four stories with roof decks hidden behind front gables. The original design incorporates elements of Colonial Revival, Italianate, and Bungalow styles. A revised design is contemporary in style. The application does not include south (Bladen's Court) and east elevation drawings.

RECUSAL: Mr. Sklaroff recused owing to the fact that Mr. Rhodes, the Elfreth's Alley Association representative, is a law partner.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Commission. Jerry Fiore represented the application. Mr. Baron noted that an updated, contemporary design was presented at the Architectural Committee meeting and was well received. He also explained that the Committee's recommendation of approval in concept did not sanction the proposed heights, decks, facade designs, and details, which are not completely defined in the design.

Mr. Fiore stated that he is encouraged by the feedback from the Architectural Committee. He explained that the design is evolving and that additional information has been submitted to Elfreth's Alley Association showing the elevation at Bladen's Court. A section drawing shows how the facade steps back from the Bladen's Court wall.

Mr. Tissian objected to the garage doors and asked if parking in the rear would be an option. Mr. Fiore responded that parking at the rear was not possible. He stated that Quarry Street is the only option for parking. Mr. Tissian opined that garages are destroying the beauty of the City of Philadelphia. He strongly objected to the garages. Mr. Huff suggested that the garage doors be paired to lessen their impact. Pairing them would make the door-wall-door rhythm smoother.

William Rhodes, president of the Elfreth's Alley Association, stated that his organization is opposed to any approval at this time. It is concerned about Bladen's Court and is working with the applicant to find an appropriate solution. He noted that the organization will review the revised plans at its next meeting. He explained that the association would like to see this site developed, but asserted that an approval in concept is not appropriate at this time.

Mr. Wilds asked the applicant why one building is taller in elevation, but the plans are identical. Mr. Fiore stated that the designs are not complete yet. He added that the buildings would not have roof decks. Mr. Wilds opined that the tallest building was located in the worst possible position, at the west overlooking Bladen's Court. Mr. Fiore explained that the building would step back from the court toward Quarry Street.

Mr. Sugrue asserted that the plans were very sketchy. He reminded his colleagues of the reviews of the Presser-Nugent project, for which the Commission demanded many details for an approval in concept.

Mr. Tissian asked Mr. Rhodes for the Elfreth's Alley Association's position on parking. Mr. Rhodes stated that he understood the need for off-street parking, but that he wanted to see the updated plans before commenting on the garages.

Mr. Steinberg requested that the façade design be simplified.

Christos Christakis, the developer, requested a conceptual approval for the demolition and new construction but not the details to allow him move forward with the project. The design is still in the development stage. He assured the association that the design will be agreeable to the neighbors.

Mr. Sugrue asserted that the demolition should be contingent upon the final approval of the proposal.

Leonard Reuter of the City's Law Department asked Mr. Christakis if he knew of any ongoing litigation related to the property. Mr. Christakis stated that he had an engineer's report that certified that the building is safe temporarily. Mr. Reuter asked if there is an ongoing lawsuit related to the property. Mr. Christakis answered in the negative.

ACTION: Mr. Rivera moved to adopt the Architectural Committee's recommendation and to approve in concept the demolition of the non-contributing building except for the south wall and the construction of four contemporary townhouses with garages, with the building heights, decks, facade designs, and other details to be addressed during subsequent review(s). Ms. Smyler seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 7 to 1. Mr. Tissian dissented.

329 SOUTH STREET

OWNER/APPLICANT: Nurit Nachum

HISTORY: c. 1890

PROPOSAL: Alter storefront

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the proposal with the wood doors, provided the coved ceiling and storefront are restored and the roll-down gate mechanism is hidden above the ceiling level, with the staff to review the details.

OVERVIEW: This proposal is a revision of an application that was submitted to the Commission for its December 2005 meeting. It proposes to alter a storefront on South Street. The applicant has amended the proposal to retain the two retail-space doors and the narrower vestibule in the exterior storefront area. However, the plans still show the removal of the rear portion of the central storefront window, converting a display peninsula into an island, which may have an impact on the ceiling of the vestibules. The

application also proposes aluminum and glass storefront doors.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application to the Commission. Architect Nurit Nachum represented the application. Mr. Rivera stated that the applicant has worked hard to revise the project to conform to the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards*.

ACTION: Ms. Smyler moved to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and to approve the proposal with the wood doors, provided the coved ceiling and storefront are restored and the roll-down gate mechanism is hidden above the ceiling level, with the staff to review the details. Mr. Sugrue seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

227 SOUTH 6TH STREET, LIPPINCOTT BUILDING

OWNER: MCW Enterprises, LLC

APPLICANT: Stephen Verner, architect

HISTORY: 1900, William Prichett, architect

PROPOSAL: Install vent for diesel generator at rear

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with the staff to review the details

OVERVIEW: This application proposes replacing a vent pipe on the rear of this building. The vent for the diesel generator currently exits the building at the first floor at the pedestrian level. The proposal calls for installing a vent that snakes up the rear of the building to the roof. The vent will be painted a brick-red color. Although the proposal addresses the rear of the Lippincott building, that façade looks onto the fronts of townhouses on Randolph Street.

RECUSAL: Mr. Sklaroff recused because of he represents a neighbor involved in litigation with the property owner.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Danta presented the application to the Commission. Stephen Verner, the architect, represented the application.

Mr. Wilds asked the applicant why he is altering the existing vent. Mr. Verner explained that the extant vent meets code, but offends the residents and neighbors because it releases exhaust at street level. Mr. Sugrue asked if the street is a service alley. Mr. Verner stated that it is.

ACTION: Mr. Tissian moved to accept the recommendation of the Architectural Committee and to approve the proposal, with the staff to review details. Mr. Rivera seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

311 – 21 DELANCEY STREET, THREE BEARS PARK

OWNER: City of Philadelphia

APPLICANT: Tanya Rorke

PROPOSAL: Rehabilitate park

ARCHITECTURAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Approval as submitted, pursuant to Standard 6 [Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of distinctive features, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.]; Standard 9 [New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale, and proportions, and massing, to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.]; and Standard 10 [New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.].

OVERVIEW: This application proposes rehabilitating the playground section of Three Bears Park. The project would include replacing the existing play equipment and play surfaces. The soft play surface will be expanded to provide code-compliant distances between the swing-set and other equipment. New benches will be installed and several trees will be replaced. The slate and brick pattern will be retained and reset at a consistent level.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Baron presented the application. Tanya Rorke, the president of the Society Hill Civic Association, represented the application.

ACTION: Mr. Sugrue moved to adopt the Architectural Committee's recommendation and approve the proposal. Mr. Tissian seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMENT

2970 MARKET STREET, UNITED STATES POST OFFICE – MAIN BRANCH

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: The staff recommends that the Commission recommend that 2970 Market Street satisfies National Register Criteria A and C and is therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places

OVERVIEW: The Bureau for Historic Preservation of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission has requested that the Philadelphia Historical Commission comment on the nomination of the United States Post Office Building at 2970 Market Street to the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination asserts that the building satisfies National Register Criteria A (It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.) and C (It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values.). Designed by the important architectural firm of Rankin & Kellogg and built between 1931 and 1935, the Art Deco

building is significant for both its architectural and technological innovations and served as a key hub in the nation's mail distribution system from its opening to the present. Most notably, it was designed to ship and receive mail by boat, train, truck, and auto-giro.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Farnham presented the nomination to the Commission. Mr. Steinberg noted the quality of the nomination, but suggested that John Wanamaker, who served as the U.S. Postmaster General, should have been mentioned.

ACTION: Mr. Steinberg moved that the Commission recommend to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission that 2970 Market Street satisfies National Register Criteria A and C and is therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Sugrue seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

THE REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION STAFF

Jonathan E. Farnham, Acting Historic Preservation Officer

Mr. Farnham presented the report to the Commission. When asked if they had questions about the report, the Commissioners replied that they had none.

HARRY A. BATTEN FUND

ACTION: Mr. Steinberg moved that the Commission approve the expenditure of \$20.78 for the Architectural Committee lunches for the meeting of 20 December 2005. Mr. Wilds seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: At 12:20 p.m., Mr. Steinberg moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Sugrue seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Gonski
Jonathan E. Farnham